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JC: Dickinson High win nation's 'brightest' science, math honors

Juliet Girard and Roshan Prabhu of Jersey City are Team Winners of \$100,000 Prize

WASHINGTON, DC — America's most brilliant teenagers were honored recently for their remarkable achievements in math and science. Two of the three "exceptional high school students" attend William L. Dickinson High School in Jersey City.

The students were named winners of the 2002-03 Siemens Westinghouse Competition in Math, Science and Technology, the nation's leading research-based science and mathematics competition for high school students.

"These students are some of the most brilliant young people in America," said Albert Hoser, chairman and CEO of the Siemens Foundation, which awards more than \$1 million annually in scholarships and grants through the Siemens Westinghouse Competition and other programs.

Juliet R. Girard and Roshan D. Prabhu, seniors at Dickinson

High School in Jersey City, NJ, won the top prize in the team category and will share a \$100,000 scholarship for their project, "Identification and High Resolution Mapping of Flowering Time Genes in Rice."

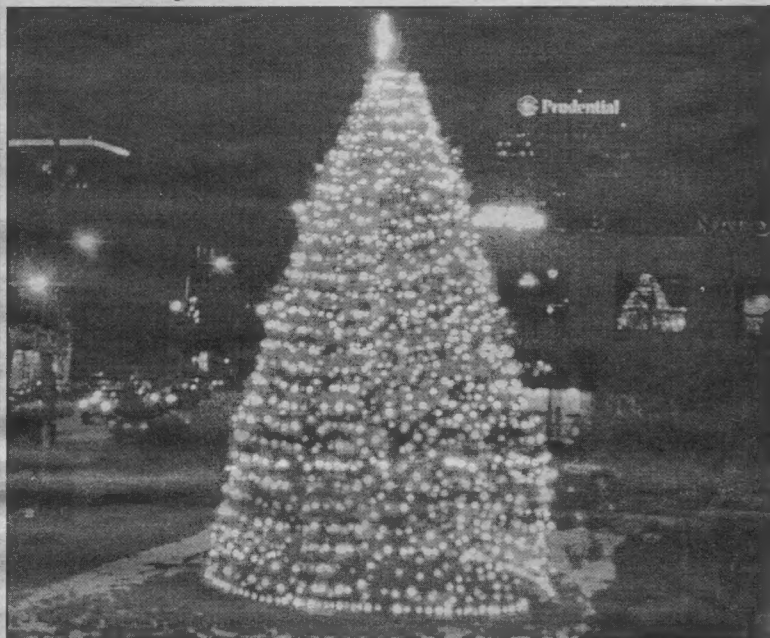
"It's a feather in our cap. It sends a message that regardless to the fact that we are an inner city school if you put your mind to something you can succeed," said Robert Donato, principal at Dickinson. "The teacher — Michael Corcoran — puts in an awful lot of time. He's in at 7:30 in the morning," Dickinson, which has some 3,000 students, is a part of the science magnet program.

Michael Corcoran, director of Science Research Magnate at Dickinson called Girard and Prabhu's achievement, "overwhelming".

"We could not have imagined that this would ever, ever have been possible," Corcoran said. "It will have changed the path of the remainder of their life." Commenting on the

See DICKINSON, page

Oh Christmas tree: Holiday tidings from a Caldwell family to the Newark family



CN photo by Scheryl Gant

The City of Newark's Christmas tree lighting ceremony was held last Tuesday evening.

by Kim Bowman

NEWARK — A 40-foot blue spruce Christmas tree donated by Caldwell family shines 9,900-lights bright in front of Newark's City Hall, bringing holiday cheer city residents and visitors.

James Gates, former mayor of Caldwell and his wife, Audrey, donated this season's spruce to Newark on sentimental merit.

"It's physically a big tree. We thought about what happen if the tree got sick and died in year, and felt it would be sad if someone couldn't have the advantage of having it as a Christmas tree," Gates said.

The tree's original owner, Christine Davis, an African American woman, planted the tree next to her home on Kirkwood Place in Caldwell 50 years ago. Davis, now 103 years-old, planted the tree after she moved into the predominantly Italian neighborhood in 1951.

Mrs. Davis, a former cook and garment industry worker,

currently resides in the West Caldwell Care Center. She was not feeling well enough to attend the lighting service.

The Gateses purchased Davis's 140-year-old home last summer. The tree was donated to Newark in November and relocated here.

"This tree is to Newark what the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree is to New York City, and it has a similar story in that it was donated by a New Jersey family to our city," Newark Mayor Sharpe James said. "This is the first time our Christmas tree came to us as a donation, which is a wonderful gesture by former Caldwell Mayor James Gates and his wife Audrey, to honor her parents, who were born in Newark."

The Gateses have close ties to Newark. They decided to donate the tree in honor of Mrs. Gates' parents, who were married in Newark. In addition, two of their nine children attended St. Benedict's and one attended NJIT in Newark.

"We have a lot of close ties

to Newark, with Beth Israel Medical Center and friends living there," said Mrs. Gates.

"Newark has done such a good job with their housing. We're very aware of what's going on and we're amazed with what they've done to rebuild the city," Gates said. They've done a great job in a real tough city."

"Newark is doing very well and I hope the tree brings light to it," Mrs. Gates added.

Last Tuesday, the city held the Christmas tree lighting ceremony. Several members of the Gates family joined the mayor, municipal employees and residents for round of Christmas carols with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Quarter and the New Jersey Philharmonic Glee Club, hot apple cider and good will on the steps of City Hall and inside the rotunda.

Commenting on the racial boundaries that the tree crossed several times, Mayor James said the tree is a living example of the true meaning of the Christmas season.

NJPPRI study finds residential statewide racial segregation

NEW BRUNSWICK — The New Jersey Public Policy Research Institute, which analyzes public policies that impact the advancement of the African-American community in New Jersey, has found "persistently high levels" of residential racial segregation, according to NJPPRI Executive Director Roland V. Anglin.

The analysis was "revealing and surprising" said Anglin, whose institute is affiliated with the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

"Using a widely recognized measure of residential segregation, we found persistently high levels of racial segregation," he said. "We are not talking about mild levels. We found what can only be termed 'hyper segregation.' In fact, a recent national study found that the Newark metropolitan area is one of the five most segregated metropoli-

tan areas in the country."

Anglin explained that the standard measure of residential segregation, called a dissimilarity index, measures whether one group is distributed in similar proportion to other groups in a given metropolis. The index ranges from 0 to 100, with a value of 60 considered very high. "In this case, it means that 60 percent or more of one racial grouping - assuming two racial groupings in the index - would need to move to a different census tract to equalize distribution of the two measured groups." He added that values of 40 to 50 are considered moderately segregated, while values of 30 and below indicated low instances of segregation. New Jersey's counties were used as the basis for measurement.

Anglin said the institute's analysis of 2000 census data revealed hyper segregation of blacks relative to whites in most

See HOUSING, page 5

Curious Observer?

The public school children in New Jersey's two largest urban cities made news last week. Once again they proved that they are as bright, engaged, talented and interested in the future of their community as children anywhere else in America.

Jersey City public school students Juliet Girard, 18, and Roshan Prabhu, 16, from William L. Dickinson High School took top honors at the Siemens Westinghouse Science Competition - for developing a project that can potentially speed up yearly rice production, a food staple for many populations around the globe. The pair are the first New Jersey students to ever win the prize.

In Newark, McKinley School students Frank Tape, 12, and Cusaj Thomas, 9, are helping the Trust For Public Lands' City Spaces Program turn an abandoned lot into a recreation oasis. Again in Newark, Tarae Howell, Yvonne Kariuki and Aileen Mack, all honor students went to Boston to explore their educational future at MIT and Harvard.

Morristown High brother and sister Adam and Blair Hornstine received two of President George W. Bush's 2001 President's Community Volunteer Awards.

These youngsters are nine more shining examples of the great, often untapped potential that is within the student body of our public school system. Some of their peers are simply waiting for that special adult to tap into their wellspring of, curiosity, excitement and intellect.

Imagine our great loss if we fail to preserve our urban public education system.

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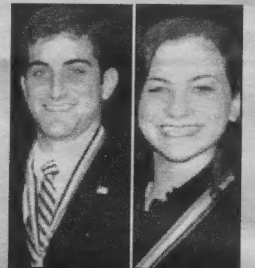
A Good Read for a Good Cause — In celebration of National Children's Book Week, Carmine Cicurillo, a Rafael Hernandez School Librarian, reads *The Giving Tree* to children from Youth-In-Action (YIA). YIA, an academically based after-school program, provides homework help and recreational activities for school-age children.



New Jersey Woman Wins National Contest — Colonia native Ruby Henry, 21, was selected as one of the winners of the 2002 *Essence* and *Lady Speed Stick* 10 Incredible College Women contest. From (l to r): Enedina Vega, *Essence* eastern advertising sales director and winner Ruby Henry; and Diane Weathers, *Essence* editor-in-chief.



Union Honors — The UWUA/UCA Local 301 was recently presented with NJ Blood Services' Award of Excellent recognition of its blood donation achievements at PSE&G's Northern Inquiry & Collection Center in Cranford.



President George W. Bush presented two of twenty 2001 President's Community Volunteer Awards to brother and sister Adam and Blair (pictured above) Hornstine of Moorestown this month.

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Central Park defendants' mothers voice their anguish

By Herb Boyd

Special to the NNPA from the Amsterdam News

NEW YORK — When the mothers of the Central Park Five-Yusef Salaam, Kharey Wise, Kevin Richardson, Raymond Santana and Antron McCray — were told of another delay in a case that many believe is as interminably long as it is unjust, they put their complaint in a letter and addressed it to acting Justice Charles Tejada, whose decision it was to give District Attorney Robert Morgenthau additional time to investigate the case.

"We have suffered for 13 years," the mothers began, "but it seems like an eternity, while the so-called justice system refused to hear our laments or even objectively review our many legal concerns regarding the many improprieties that we perceived to be evident in this case."

In a surprise move Morgenthau recommended throwing out all convictions against the five defendants. He cited "significant weaknesses" in the men's confessions, which "increases the probability that the evidence would result in a different verdict." Judge Tejada is expected to rule by Feb. 6.

The mothers — Sharonne Salaam, Deloris Wise, Linda McCray and Grace Cuffee (Kevin Richardson's mother) — contend that Fairstein and others on the prosecution team have built their careers at the expense of their children's lives.

"It has been our hope, although not our belief, that we would be treated fairly and democratically, given the confession of Matias Reyes and the forensic verification validating his admission," the mothers continued.

Reyes, who is serving time for other crimes, confessed earlier this year that he alone raped and beat the young investment banker on the morning in April 1989. An examination of DNA samples from the crime scene which matched Reyes, and his confession, are the grounds upon which the defense, primarily attorneys Roger Wareham and Michael Warren, is basing its demand for exoneration and acquittal.

There are also reports that former New York City Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly formed a new investigatory group to assist Morgenthau's efforts, ostensibly to disprove that Reyes was the lone assailant.

Morris Brown loses accreditation, Grambling hangs on

ATLANTA — Louisiana's Grambling State University, a 101-year-old black college whose alumni include the late Sammy Davis Jr., received acknowledgement last week from the chief accrediting body of colleges and universities in the South that their accreditation would not be revoked.

The news from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), however, was not good for Morris Brown College. The 117-year-old institution was stripped of its accreditation last week. Morris Brown is report-



Morris Brown College

ed to be more than \$15 million in debt and is accused of mismanaging its student financial aid program. The SACS ruling means that the 2,500 students at Morris Brown will become ineligible for financial aid.

Morris Brown and Grambling were the only two historically black college and university schools out of 11 on probation to lose their accreditation by the SACS.

The United Negro College Funds recently charged that HBCU's are held to higher standards than other schools, however James Rogers, executive director of the Commission on Colleges, said the problem is with private colleges, not the racial composition of those schools.

Indeed, the largest of the 103 HBCUs have large enroll-

ments and endowments. This category includes Hampton University in Virginia, Morehouse and Spelman colleges in Atlanta, Florida A&M University in Tallahassee and Howard University in Washington, D.C. The remaining other schools, however, struggle to get enrollment, financial support, and staff.

Asked if the current dilemma meant that Morris Brown was closing, Charles Taylor, president since September, "We are going to do everything in our power to make sure this decision does not stand."

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Editorial

There's a lot to the Lott issue

It seems like a forgone conclusion that Senate Republican Leader Trent Lott can not ascend to the post of Senate Majority Leader in the 108th Congress on January 7, given the tsunami cause by his lament about the nation's failure to elect Strom Thurmond president in 1948.

Back in 1948 Thurmond was nominated for president by the States Rights Democratic Party, on the plank that "We stand for the segregation of the races and the racial integrity of each race." Recently at Thurmond's 100th birthday party Lott said if America had elected him to the presidency, "we would not have had all these problems over all these years."

Lott's statement was coded, but black America and many white Americans got his message loud and clear. — "I still believe in you Strom baby". While too many of his Republican cohorts are trying to pass his remarks off as thoughtless, clearly Lott's words reflect a Republican agenda to dismantle opportunities gained in the war against segregation and racial oppression. It is important, however, that blacks do not get so caught up in the sacrificing of Lott on the political altar, that we take our eyes off the main player and the big picture. Republicans are intent on rolling back the clock to the days of Strom Thurmond if they can. Now that Lott has let the cat out of the bag, the Republicans need to dump him for someone who can get their agenda accomplished beneath the racism radar.

The main player is President George W. Bush, who took one week to declare that Sen. Lott's comments "do not reflect the spirit of our country." The President, who also called Lott's comments "offensive" gave Lott an advance notice of the tepid rebuke — wink, wink, but did not demand that Lott resign immediately.

The fact is Mr. Bush, Sen. Lott, many Republicans and yes, some Democrats, share many of the same conservative sentiments when it comes to social, economic and real justice for African Americans in this country. Racial prejudice still exists in the United States, and prejudice against blacks is still more insidious and vehement than bias against other ethnic groups. That is how Lott — a Mississippi Senator whose long history of racism includes voting against the Voting Rights Act extension; voting against the confirmation of Judge Roger Gregory, the first African American judge ever seated on the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals; and defending the Council of Conservative Citizens and Bob Jones University — rose to his leadership height.

Sen. Lott, in his celebratory exuberance, simply said what many whites believe, and in doing so, he has stirred up the specter of "the old south" at a time when President Bush, armed with a majority in Congress, is preparing to populate our federal courts, and perhaps even the Supreme Court with conservative judges, who will in their own way, deal with "these problems."

African Americans must be mindful that the Republicans plan to dismantle the social contract that we fought and died for in the 1950s and 1960s. Today the Republicans call it "the Southern Strategy", in 1948 Mr. Thurmond called it "the question of social intermingling of the races." The big picture today include the Supreme Court cases dealing with the University of Michigan, the California Racial Privacy Initiative; the failure by Congress to pass Hate Crimes Legislation; all point towards an impending change that President Bush would like to become his legacy.

So now that we have peered into the mindset of The Southern Strategy, we must not rest securely when Sen. Lott is derailed, he is an expendable. Let's vigilantly hold the Bush Administration



Two local organizations the New Jersey based People's Organization for Progress (POP) and Women in Support of the Million Man March (WISOMMM) called on December 17th for Trent Lott's censure by the United States Senate and for his resignation as the Senate Majority Leader. POP chairman Larry Hamm said Lott "must resign because his public pronouncements and his voting record demonstrate that he cannot be a true leader for all the people of this country." Shown here at the Newark press conference are (l - r) Irvington Mayor Wayne Smith, state Assemblyman William D. Payne, Fredrika Bey, executive director of WISOMMM and Larry Hamm.

Trent Lott's remorse on B.E.T. Who says that black votes don't count?

By Rick Thigpen

So many African-Americans feel that their vote doesn't count today and that they are ignored by the powerful. Just the other day, Trent Lott, the Senate Republican Leader, stunned the political world by telling guests at the 100th birthday party of retiring Senator Strom Thurmond that

These two men are not friends of the black community, so why are Republicans running for cover and what in the world possessed Senator Lott to appear on BET?

he was proud that his own state of Mississippi was one of only four states carried by Thurmond's Dixiecrat (read segregationist) ticket in 1948. He added that "if the rest of the country had ... followed our lead, we wouldn't have had all of these problems." This was a slap right in our face from one of America's most powerful politicians.

No one who knows this Senator, let alone his colleagues in the U.S. Senate, can really be surprised at his remarks, only at his candor. Senator Lott has for years been whistling Dixie. These comments are only the latest demonstration of his

Two generations ago my family escaped North Carolina to find opportunity. Now a Senate Majority Leader is going to be to be forced to resign for wishing we were back in Dixie. Now that's progress!

fondness for days of a long-time gone, but not forgotten era. Moreover, whether it's the silent majority, Reagan Democrats or the suburban strategy, Republican politics excel at using coded language to harvest votes out of the white backlash to African-American advancement.

If this is all true, then what is all the hubbub? President Bush quickly distanced himself from Lott's remarks and the number two man in the Senate Republican caucus, Don Nickles of Oklahoma has called for Lott to step down as their leader. These two men are not really known as friends of the African-American community. So, why are Republicans running for cover and what in the world possessed Senator Lott to appear on BET?

The American population is rapidly diversifying and it is changing Republican politics. It also will affect politics here

in New Jersey. It was reported that only 15 percent of the people who voted for President Bush in 2000 were black people, Hispanics or non-Christians. By contrast, more than half of Al Gore's voters came from these minority groups.

Let's use New Jersey as our example of the politics of demographics. In the last census, 66 percent of New Jerseyans were labeled as "non-hispanic" whites. Recognizing that the electorate is more white than the population, you would still need about 75 percent of the white vote alone to achieve a majority. However, if you can win about 30 percent of the non-white vote then you only need about two-thirds of the white vote to win.

Hence, you begin to see the political cliff that following Lott's politics will cause Republicans to drive over. So what we are witnessing here is a beginning. Republicans are beginning to accept that their future political fortunes lie with the necessity of building multi-ethnic electoral coalitions.

Two generations ago my family was forced to flee North Carolina to find opportunity and now a Senate Majority Leader is about to be forced to resign just for wishing we were back in Dixie. Now that's progress.

Rick Thigpen is a political consultant and partner at The Strategy Group, a government relations consulting firm with offices in Trenton and Newark.

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DICKINSON AWARD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



Seen here are Peter von Siemens, Siemens Foundation Board Member (l - r) Roshan Prabhu and Juliet Girard of the William L. Dickinson High School, and Bettina von Siemens.

media attention Dickinson has received as a result of the research accomplishments, Corcoran said that Girard and Prabhu "have long coats".

Girard and Prabhu identified genes that contribute to early flowering time in rice, a discovery that could lead to increased crop production through earlier and more frequent harvests per year, as well as allow for the growth of rice in regions with shorter growing seasons. The two seniors conducted their research during an internship in the NASA Sharp Plus Program at the Cornell University Department of Plant Breeding.

Ms. Girard, who conducted the experimental genetics aspects of the project, plans to study biochemistry, molecular biology and environmental science in college. Mr. Prabhu, who conducted the computational work, plans to study design and graphic arts, biomedical engineering or computer engineering in college.

The two Dickinson High students were selected from among 1,142 students who entered the 2002-03 Siemens Westinghouse Competition in Math, Science and Technology. For more information, on the Siemens competition visit www.siemens-foundation.org.

HOUSING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

counties, except Cumberland (42), Gloucester (41) and Warren (38). Essex County, which has the highest levels of African-Americans, is also the most segregated. "Eighty percent of the population would have to move for the county to become more integrated."

"Some counties with cities containing large numbers of blacks, such as Camden, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex and even Essex became less segregated, but our mapping of racial changes in all counties does not show significant outward movement," Anglin said, noting that residential clustering by race in New Jersey and elsewhere is conditioned not only by choice but by racial steering as well.

"Local custom and real estate agents steer African-Americans to places already populated by African-Americans," Anglin said, a practice that is far from "cost-free and benign" to those seeking better circumstances through home ownership or residential upgrading.

"The median home values for the state's African-American households are, on average, a third less than white households," Anglin said. "Thus, African-American households, whether they

choose a predominately African-American neighborhood or are steered to one, pay a substantial cost for residential segregation."

"The other factor is that nearly 19 percent of the African-American population in New Jersey falls below the poverty line compared with 6 percent of the white population," he added. "The African-American poor tend to be concentrated in census tracts with limited access to good housing, health care, jobs and quality schools."

"Proportionate distribution of African-American poor would assist with revitalization

of urban areas in addition to providing opportunities to maximize upward mobility through access to better schools and jobs."

Acknowledging the complexities of residential racial segregation, Anglin said it would take at least several decades before New Jersey counties are relatively integrated by race. Anglin also referenced the New Jersey Supreme Court's Mount Laurel affordable housing decision as a validation of the principle that jurisdictions experiencing population growth accept a fair share of the concentrated urban poor.

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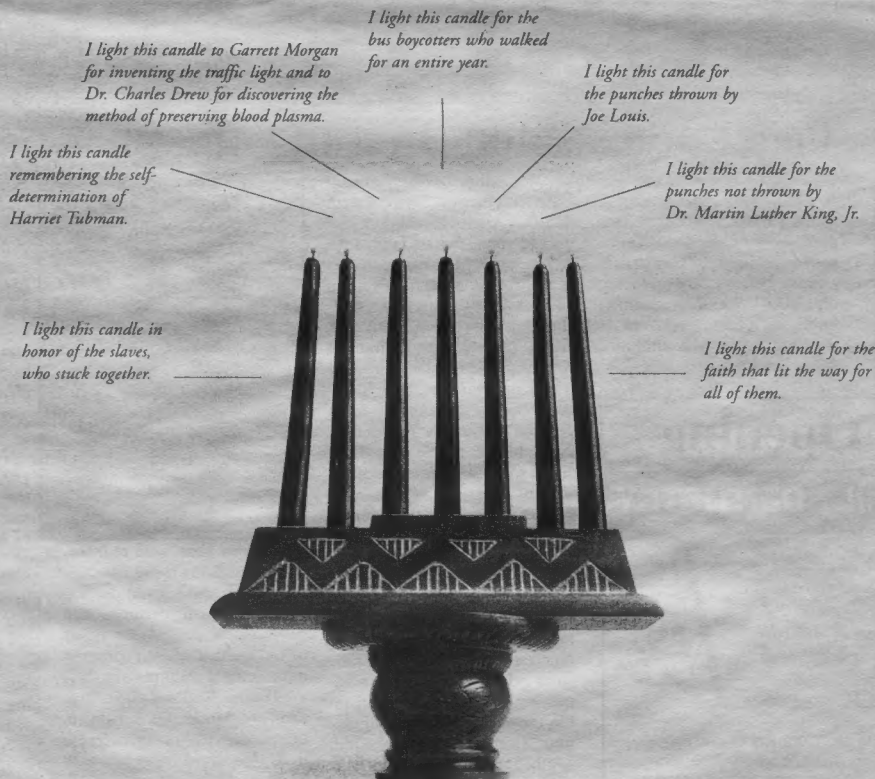
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This week, we join the community in lighting Kwanzaa candles to the African-Americans who made the path brighter for all of us. Happy Kwanzaa.

Haywire heart may be S.I.D.S. culprit

CHICAGO — The world's first comprehensive population based genetic autopsy suggests that an electrical problem in the heart may cause one out of 20 cases (5 percent) of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), researchers reported today at the American Heart Association's 95th annual Scientific Sessions. The American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions is the world's premier gathering devoted to cardiovascular research and medicine, and the 2002 Scientific Sessions conference is being attended by more than 30,000 scientists, cardiologists, medical researchers, surgeons, other medical professionals, exhibitors and media from throughout the world.

The problem is similar to a heart condition called long QT syndrome that contributes to sudden death in young people and adults. In long QT syndrome, the heart electrically recharges itself too slowly or in a disorganized fashion in preparation for the next heartbeat, says lead author Michael J. Ackerman, M.D., Ph.D., an assistant professor at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn.

When combined with a trigger, such as intense emotion or physical exertion, a long QT heart can go out of control and cause cardiac arrest and sudden death.

"This often explains cases in which children die suddenly

About 3,000 infants die each year of SIDS, defined as the sudden and unexplained death of an infant less than one year old."

U.S. Vital Statistics

while playing in the sandbox, teenagers die of unexplained drowning, or previously healthy young adults die suddenly while jogging or shoveling snow," he explains.

Cardiac arrest can be fatal within minutes unless the heart's electrical pattern is restored spontaneously or with the aid of a defibrillator, he says. Current estimates suggest long QT syndrome may affect as many as one in 5,000, says Ackerman.

According to U.S. Vital Statistics, about 3,000 infants die each year of SIDS, defined as the sudden and unexplained death of an infant less than one year old. Several possible causes or triggers have been suggested for SIDS, including babies sleeping on their stomachs, nervous system problems related to breathing, abnormal metabolism in the liver and flaws in the heart's electrical channels, he says.

The electrical or ion channels are proteins critical to orchestrating the electrical sig-

nals that prompt the heart to squeeze (beat) and refill between each heartbeat, says Ackerman, who is also director of the Mayo Clinic's sudden death genomics lab and the long QT syndrome clinic.

Ackerman's team performed a genetic autopsy on every unexplained infant death investigated by the Arkansas State Crime Laboratory between September 1997 and August 1999: a total of 93. Researchers extracted DNA from frozen heart tissue and studied the five genes linked to long QT syndrome.

"Long QT syndrome is sometimes called the perfect killer, because it leaves no clues," says Ackerman. "Neither does SIDS. Our goal is to discover the truth. SIDS will probably turn out to have 20 different underlying causes," he says. "If we can figure out what they are, we can screen for them and hopefully one day, prevent future cases of SIDS."

Although these findings are beginning to shed light on the causes of SIDS, there is no routine clinical test to screen for such cardiac causes, Ackerman explains. He says parents should continue to follow simple preventive measures that have decreased the frequency of SIDS: 1) don't place a baby on his/her stomach to sleep, 2) don't expose a baby to cigarette smoke and 3) don't cover a baby with heavy blankets.

Health Brief

STATE PLANS FIRST 15,000 SMALLPOX SHOTS

By the end of January or early February 2003, New Jersey plans to begin vaccinating up to 15,000 public health workers and hospital staff that have volunteered to be the front line of defense in the state's smallpox preparedness effort, Health and Senior Services Commissioner Clifton R. Lacy, M.D. announced recently.

Clinics will be located in the northeast, northwest, central east, central west and southern regions of New Jersey - with an additional clinic in Newark to cover Metropolitan Medical Response System Personnel. It is estimated from prior experience with the vaccine that approximately 15 individuals per million vaccinated will experience life threatening adverse effects and that one or two per million will die as a result of vaccination.

ELDERLY HEART ACHE LEADS TO HEART DISEASE

Loneliness, lack of emotional support and lack of companionship or social support can leave elderly men and women vulnerable to heart problems, according to new research in the December issue of the journal *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*. Dara Sorkin, a Ph.D. candidate of the University of California, Irvine, and colleagues found that for every unit increase in loneliness as measured among older adults in their study, there was a threefold increase in the odds of being diagnosed with a heart condition.

STUDY: SHIP SANITATION, DIARRHEA LINKED

A new report links diarrhea outbreaks aboard vacation cruise ships to the scores they get on mandatory sanitation inspections. The research findings are scheduled to appear in the April 2003 issue of the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* but will be available on that journal's Web site www.ajpm-online.net this month. The data is being released in conjunction with a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report analyzing a recent wave of diarrhea and vomiting among cruise passengers on Holland America Line's Amsterdam and Disney Line's Magic, Carnival Cruise Lines' Fascination and P&O Cruises of London's Oceana. Hundreds of passengers fell ill in November and December.

STUDY SEEKS TO UNLOCK SMOKING, WEIGHT LINK

Smokers trying to kick the habit often experience extra pounds piling on within the first few weeks after quitting. It's still unclear exactly how smoking affects body weight, but the culprit is not leptin, a protein implicated in weight control, according to a study in the current issue of the *Journal of Nicotine & Tobacco Research*.

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Panel urges safety first in Christmas toy choices

NEWARK — Of the nearly 2 billion toys and games sold in the United States each year, most are purchased during this busy time of the holiday season. Despite better safety protection regulations placed on manufacturers in recent years, not all toys are made with children's safety in mind.

According to the National Safe Kids Campaign, more than 118,000 American children age 14 and younger were treated for toy related injuries in emergency rooms in 1999, resulting in 16 deaths. What's more, children age 4 and younger account for 60 percent of those injuries and 75 percent of the deaths.

Neil Schamban, MD, director of pediatric emergency medicine at Children's Hospital of New Jersey at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, an affiliate of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System, notes some of the most common injuries associated with toy safety.

"Each year, children require emergency care for injuries resulting from choking on small objects or latex balloons; falls from riding toys such as wagons and scooters; burns from electrical cords; and strangulation from cords," he said. "Although good labeling helps parents choose safe toys and games for their children, they still need to be aware of the potential risks of items that are not normally considered hazardous. For example, the lid of a toy chest can close and trap or



This teddy bear, sold at IKEA, is on the 2002 toy recall list.

avoid toys with small parts. A small parts container, available at most toy and baby specialty stores, can serve as a guide. If a toy or part fits into the container, then it is a choking hazard.

3. Toys with sharp edges and points, as well as electric toys with heating elements, should be restricted to children age eight and older.

4. Select Mylar balloons instead of latex balloons to avoid choking hazards. Avoid toys with strings, cords or straps longer than seven inches because they may pose a risk of strangulation.

5. Encourage children to put away toys after playing with them. Safe storage keeps toys designed for older children out of reach of younger ones. It also prevents falls from tripping.

For more information on toys that have been recalled log on to the Consumer Product Safety Commission's website: www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/category/toy.html. Some other toy safety web sites are www.safetyalerts.com, or www.kidsource.com, and www.recalls.org.

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Toni Staton Harris

By Chance or Choice: a tale about real life dilemmas

Set in the present day, New York, New Jersey metropolitan area, *By Chance or Choice* is a journey through the lives of five African-American adults. On this path, Calvin, Talise, Steffon, Gem and Stephanie find themselves enthralled in a plethora of situations.

The story follows the char-

acters as they are faced with the real life dilemmas of love, lust, betrayal, questioned sexuality, danger, infidelity, sexual harassment and ultimately loyalty.

In the middle of a scandalous divorce, Talise the main protagonist falls into the arms of a forbidden love affair with Calvin much to the dismay of everyone around her, especially her two best friends Gem and Stephanie. After numerous protests the girls agree that

By Chance or Choice

Written By: Toni Staton Harris

Published by: Epiphany Publishing

Talise must be allowed to fall on her face. But their intense loyalty for each other is severely challenged when Talise's choices jeopardize not only her own life but theirs as well.

Along comes lover boy

Steffon, the antagonist, (a role which is shared by all intermittently) is a two bit hood sitting on the fence, trying to make a dollar out of fifteen cents, who packs a bag of devastation and deceit all for the prize. And he is not concerned with whom he drags along in his misery until his only true treasure is violated and destroyed.

Gem and Stephanie are not innocent bystanders in this saga. Gem has her eyes on the common prize of fame and fortune and she is almost willing to risk everything she's fought so incredibly hard for to obtain it. Her life takes a dramatic turn when she's forced to reevaluate what she really wants in life, why and from whom. And while Stephanie is there to guide them through a maze for which they must find their way out, Stephanie is struggling with a horrific life altering secret that she has yet to face but once revealed will shatter

the lives of all.

In this tale, many of the characters' most challenging situations appear to be at a crossroads. And, at every crossroad each has the opportunity to recognize, acknowledge and accept the choices of their past without condemning their future. Choice then becomes their God given responsibility to be wise and empower themselves.

This is a story that explores the trials, tribulations and triumphs of the "terrible twos" also known as the twenties. It is a journey that seeks to teach that nothing happens by Chance but by Choice.

Toni Staton Harris is a first-time novelist, actress and flight attendant. A native of northern New Jersey, Harris is a proud graduate of the terrible twos and devoted the concept of the power of choice, which is the focus of her lecture series and teen literary club, Epiphany Charm, LLC in Newark.

My Holiday Recipe

- Grandma's slammin' cornbread dressing
- Some old-school Christmas LP's
- Kayla and Sharise messing with their toys
- Tavis home from college
- A serious feast with holiday flavor
- The men mad into the game
- Some belt-loosening and kickin' back
- And a lot of thankfulness for another year together

Add Coke. Mix it all together. Chill. And serve.



peace

Coca-Cola

Maplewood/South Orange

All events will be held at the South Orange Middle School, 70 N. Ridgewood Road, South Orange. Afternoon events are from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Evening Events include fire works at 7:00 p.m. Performers include BREAK! The Urban Funk Spectacular, Doug Young Comedy Magic and Illusions. For info call 973-76-FIRST.

Montclair

Opening ceremonies begin at 7:00 p.m. The headliner is recording artist Phoebe Snow, and includes performances by the New Jersey Ballet; Camila Benson, Brazilian vocals and acoustic guitar performer, Spiritual Drumming and Gylil; Children's Midway; Magic is Funny; Rebecca Frezza and the Big Truck. At the Serendipity Cafe once again the microphone is open for Montclair's own to take to the stage at this teen cafe. For info call 973-509-4910.

Morris County

Morris County's celebration begins at 7:15 p.m. and include a presentation of Neil Simon's play "I Ought To Be in Pictures", Bickford Theatre at The Morris Museum; world renowned pianist Alexander Slobodyanik; Benjamin Lipman - juggler, magician, comedian and much more. For info call 973-455-0708.

Newark

There are no events planned this year.

Ridgefield in Bergen County

The Children's Program will be held at the Benjamin Franklin Middle School from 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Fireworks at 7:15 p.m. - BF Field, and the Evening Program will be from 8:00 p.m. - 12:30 a.m. For info call 201-447-1739.

Summit

Children events scheduled from 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. at the Summit Middle School Evening program at the same location from 7:00 p.m. to midnight. For info call 908-522-1722, ext. 27.

Teaneck

Musical Highlights include the Tony Trischka Band, an Afro Pop Band with members from the Lion King; Klezmer, Jazz, Community Cabaret and more than 30 events and arts projects. For info call 201-287-9730.

E BRIEFS



Entertainment

— Kim Bowman

NAACP IMAGE AWARDS TO BE BOYCOTTED

Last week in Los Angeles, Project Islamic H.O.P.E. and a coalition national and community groups held a press conference to announce the launching of a national boycott of the NAACP Image Awards.

"The NAACP Image Awards has delivered a slap in the face to the legacy of Dr. King, and Rosa Parks. Cedric the Entertainer should not be rewarded with an Image Award nomination for his disparaging remarks about Dr. King and Miss Parks. We should not reward buffoonery, cooning, or disparaging remarks against civil rights icons for a two-second laugh," stated Najee Ali, Executive Director Project Islamic H.O.P.E.

Ali also said that the Reverend Al Sharpton was down with the idea of a boycott. Interestingly, the press conference was held at the New Millennium Barbershop 4310 Crenshaw Blvd. in L.A.

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2002 - 2003 SEASON

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New Jersey PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



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Jubilation choir

A JOYOUS GOSPEL HOLIDAY NJ PAC Jubilation Choir with special guest DARYL COLEY

Thursday, December 19 at 7:00
Ages 12 & up • Prudential Hall

Join the acclaimed 120-voice NJ PAC Jubilation Choir with Daryl Coley, a dynamic presence in Gospel music, for this rousing holiday concert.

Tickets: Adult \$29 • Child \$16

Enjoy the inspiring sounds of NJ PAC's Jubilation Choir
AT HOME! Debut CD available December 2002!
Call 1-888-GO-NJPAC for details.

A TRIBUTE TO THE ELDERS Kwanzaa Honoree Celebration and Reception

Friday, December 20 at 5:00
Ages 12 & up • The Chase Room

Join us at this gala reception as we celebrate and honor outstanding community elders Wilbur McNeil and Sally Carroll. Hosted by Chuck Davis, with C. Katunge Mimy. In association with the Newark Branch of the NAACP, The North Jersey Unit of the National Association of Negro Business & Professional Women's Club, Inc., and the Weequahic Park Association.

Tickets: Adult/Child \$31
(Includes hors d'oeuvres and refreshments)

COMING SOON!

THREE MO' TENORS

Friday, December 20 at 8:00
Prudential Hall
\$49 \$48 \$35 \$27 \$19 \$13

CIRQUE ELOIZE

Nomade
Friday, December 27
at 7:30; Saturday,
December 28 at 2:00 &
7:30; Sunday, December
29 at 1:30
Prudential Hall • \$49-\$13



REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRATION

NJPAC Jubilation Choir with special guests ALBERTINA WALKER and DOROTHY NORWOOD and special guest speaker OSSIE DAVIS Thursday, January 16 at 7:00 Ages 12 & up
Prudential Hall Adult \$29 Child \$16
Pre-Performance Reception at 5:00
The Chase Room • \$31
(does not include performance ticket)

VOICE OF THE DRAGON: ONCE
UPON A TIME IN CHINESE AMERICA
Fred Ho and The Afro Asian Music Ensemble
Saturday, January 18 at 7:30
Victoria Theater • \$31



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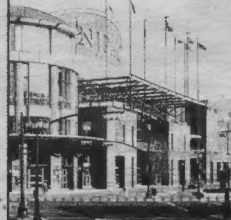
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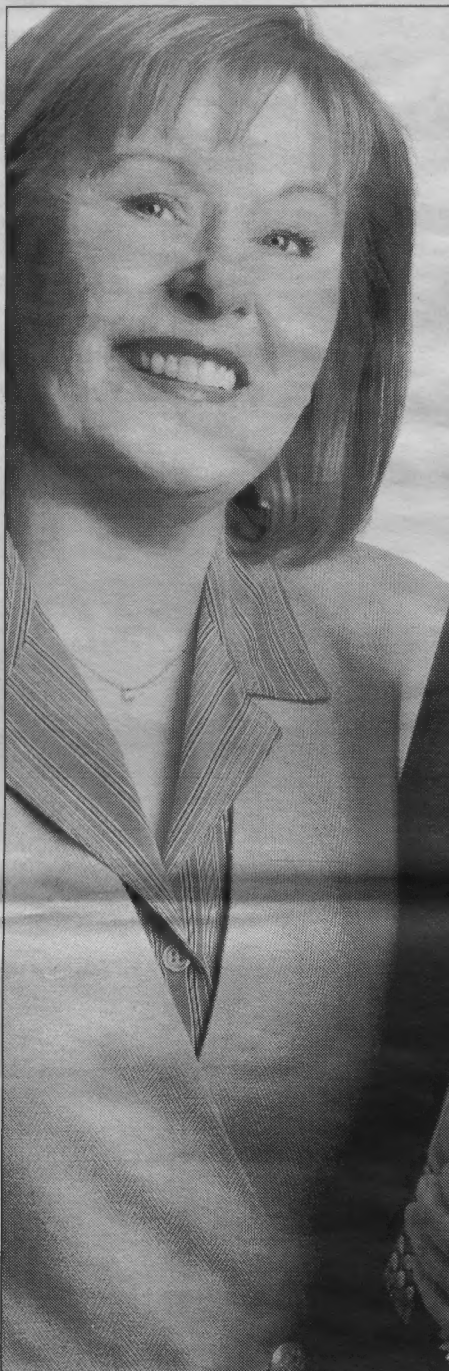
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Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE

NJ TRANSIT administers the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Section 5310 Grant Program in the State of New Jersey. The goal of the program is to provide capital assistance in meeting the transportation needs of senior citizens and people with disabilities where public transportation services are unavailable, insufficient or inappropriate.

NJ TRANSIT is now accepting applications from private non-profit organizations who wish to apply for a vehicle to transport senior citizens and/or people with disabilities within their community. It is the intention of NJ TRANSIT to submit a statewide grant application to the federal government in the spring of 2003.

It is a competitive grant process. If an application is selected for inclusion in the statewide grant and the FTA approves the grant then the successful applicant will enter into a no fee agreement with NJ TRANSIT to operate and maintain the vehicle for the purposes detailed in the applicant's application.

NJ TRANSIT encourages minority based organizations to apply for equipment under the Section 5310 Program. Those private non-profit organizations wishing to receive an application can request one by writing:

NJ TRANSIT
Office of Service Contracts
Local Program Support, 7th floor
One Penn Plaza East
Newark, New Jersey 07105-2246
Attention: Section 5310 Program

Interested organizations may also request an application by telephone by calling (973) 491-7372.

The closing date for NJ TRANSIT to accept applications is January 24, 2003.

\$19.60

The Long Branch Housing Authority (LBHA) requires the professional services of a qualified Law Firm for legal services as:

General Counsel including Capital Improvements and Construction, Labor, and Tenancy

The LBHA intends to enter into an agreement to provide these legal services for a one year period, (probably commencing in February 1, 2003).

The LBHA therefore requests proposals from qualified law firms WITH A MINIMUM OF FIVE YEARS HOUSING AUTHORITY EXPERIENCE in the work described under the Scope of Services.

The LBHA RFP may be obtained by picking up at the Authority's Central Office, Garfield Court, Long Branch, N.J. 07740. For package please call (732) 222-3747 extension 126, Chris Campione.

All proposals must be received by the LBHA, at its Central Office, ATTN: Mr. Tyrone Garrett, Executive Director, by the close of business (4:00 P.M.) on December 31, 2002.

If sufficient proposals are received, award may be made by the Board of Commissioners at its January meeting.

Tyrone Garrett
Executive Director

\$13.47

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

LEGALS and CLASSIFIEDS

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF NEWARK
57 SUSSEX AVENUE, NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07103

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Request for Proposal #02-P1830-1

The Housing Authority of the City of Newark (NHA) is seeking proposals from qualified Consultants for the Purchase and Implementation of Integrated Computer Business Applications. The application(s) will replace current automated/manual processes relating to Finance and Administration, Low Income Housing, Section 8 and other key activities performed by NHA.

Interested firms may obtain the "General Scope of Services" for the proposal from the Authority's Contracts Division, 500 Broad Street, Newark, New Jersey 07102; Telephone: (973) 273-6502.

A Pre-proposal Conference will be held on Tuesday, December 10, 2002 at 10:00 A.M. at 500 Broad Street, 5th Floor Conference Room, Newark, New Jersey 07102. We encourage all prospective Proposers to attend the pre-proposal conference. Prospective Proposers that cannot physically attend the conference can participate via teleconference. Any potential proposer that expects to attend the pre-proposal conference in person or via teleconference should RSVP to Antoinette Tillery by 4:00 pm on Monday, December 9, 2002, at 973-273-6528. Additionally, NHA recommends that prospective Proposers submit written questions in advance of the pre-proposal conference. The questions should be labeled Purchase and Implementation of Integrated Computer Business Applications, RFP#02-P1830-1. Proposers Questions. Proposers will be permitted to ask additional questions at the conference.

Proposals shall be submitted on or before Tuesday, January 7, 2002 at 4:00 P.M. Proposals can only be submitted via hard copy, e-mails will not be accepted. One original and six copies of the proposals are required. The original should be noted as such. Proposals can only be submitted via hard copy in loose-leaf binder. All proposals must be labeled Purchase and Implementation of Integrated Computer Business Applications, RFP #02-P1830-1.

The Housing Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals, or to waive any in-formalities in the proposals. Proposers are required to comply with the requirements of P.L. 1975, c.127.

Proposals shall be submitted to:
Jimmy Miller, Deputy Executive Director
Contracts Division
The Housing Authority of the City of Newark
500 Broad Street
Newark, New Jersey 07102

No proposal shall be withdrawn for a period of one hundred twenty (120) calendar days subsequent to the date of receipt of the proposal without the consent of the Housing Authority of the City of Newark. The Housing Authority of the City of Newark reserves the right to waive any in-formalities in the proposals and the right to reject all proposals in the event that less than two (2) proposals are received.

For further information, contact Antoinette Tillery, Coordinator of Contractual Operations (973) 273-6528, or e-mail address atillery@NewarkHA.org, or by fax @ 973-273-6549.

The Housing Authority of the City of Newark
Harold Lucas
Executive Director

\$35.52

SUPERVISOR ASSISTANT

Public Agency seeks individuals to tutor children M-F, 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., at an After-school Program. \$12.00 per hour. Must have at least four years experience working with youth and pass a basic skills test. Must have a high school or GED diploma. Send resume or come in to fill out an application. Deadline 12/27/02.

Housing Authority of the City of Passaic
333 Passaic St., Passaic, NJ 07055
Attn: Sandra Ortiz

Equal Opportunity Employer

SANTA

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

Newark — Kris Kringle visits Hayes Park West Recreation Center at 179 Boyd St. at 11:00 a.m. Mayor Sharpe James says the first 250 children will get their photo taken. The event is open to all Newark residents.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24 AND WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25

Irvington — Santa will deliver gifts and critical emergency pediatric care beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Irvington General Hospital.

COMMUNITY

Ongoing

Holiday shoppers can help the National Black United Fund by making their purchases through www.buyforcharity.com. The website offers purchases from high caliber vendors such as Dell and the GAP, but more than one-third of the sale benefits the National Black United Fund.

Earthwatch Institute is offering fellowships to fund K-12 educators to join a scientific research expedition around the world. For info call 800-776-0018, ext. 118.

The PNC Bank Arts Center's Holiday Light Spectacular continues Sundays — Thursdays from 5:00 p.m. — 10:00 p.m.

From now through May 1, 2003, tenants in unheated apartments can complain to the "No Heat Hotline." Call 973-733-6471.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 19

Newark — POP will observe the passing of the 13th Amendment which abolished slavery, 6:00 p.m., Abyssinian Baptist Church, 224 West Kinney Street.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

An interview of Mayor Wayne Smith of Irvington by Patrick J. McNally, Essex County Clerk will be aired on WFME 94.7 Radio at 3:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. They will discuss local political issues.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7 THRU FRIDAY, JANUARY 10

Assemblyman William D. Payne will hold a Coat and Eyeglass Drive to benefit local shelters. Donations can be dropped off at his District Office, 40 Clinton Street, Suite 200 between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. For info call 973-621-1400.

BUSINESS

ONGOING

The State Chamber and the New Jersey Law Journal have published their 2003 New Jersey Tax Handbook. For info call 973-642-0075 ext. 140.

The First Data Western Union Foundation encourages African



Saturday, December 21 — The Motown All-Star Reunion featuring the Legendary Lead Singers of The Temptations and the Marvelettes will be presented by the Somerset County Vocational and Technical Schools Foundation and Brook Arts Center, 8:00 p.m. at Somerset County Vo-Tech High Theater. For info call 908-8900, ext. 7219.

Americans to apply for scholarship and grant opportunities. For more info visit their website at: www.firstdatawesternunion.org.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26 THRU THURSDAY, JANUARY 9

Union County College will hold registration for its most popular courses. For info on the Winter Session call 908-709-7518.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15 AND THURSDAY, JANUARY 16

Essex County College is holding registration for a series of technology courses, certificate programs and personal development classes. A one night Windows prerequisite for all Windows courses will be offered on the above dates. For info on the Spring Session and to register call 973-877-3436.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18

Essex County College's Saturday Youth Program begins. Programs include Chess is Fun, Problem Solving Math, Computer Discovery, How to Study, Fun With Science Lab. The program is for students from six years of age to high school students. For info on the Spring Session and to register call 973-877-3416.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 25

Cranford — Union County College will offer Make Your Resume Work For You from 10:00 a.m. to noon, 1033 Springfield Ave. To register call 908-709-7600.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 25

East Brunswick — The NJ Commerce & Economic Growth Commission hosts a NJ — Africa Trade and Business Conference at the East Brunswick Hilton. For info call 609-292-5431.

HEARTBEAT

Ongoing

Newark Beth Israel Medical Center offers persons with arthritis instruction on pain management strategies for decreasing pain. For info call 973-923-2348.

Newark Beth Israel Medical Center offers education and counseling for adolescents at 4:00 p.m. in the Family Health Center. For info call 973-923-2348.

Clara Maass Medical Center offers adult CPR pediatric courses. To register call 973-450-2709.

Union Hospital holds blood drives at 3:00 p.m. on Mondays and Fridays. Call 1-480-BLOOD-NJ.

Clara Maass Medical Center offers cardiac rehabilitation at 8:00 a.m. For info call 973-524-4056.

Irvington General Hospital offers free support groups for gay men with HIV/AIDS on Thursdays at noon. For info call 973-275-0210.

Irvington General Hospital offers free support groups for adults HIV/AIDS on Fridays at 10:00 a.m. For info call 973-275-0210.

Irvington General Hospital offers GYN services on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Call 973-399-638.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19

Newark — Newark Beth Israel Medical Center and the American Red Cross sponsor a Blood Drive from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room at 201 Lyons Ave. To register call 973-926-7041.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27

Elizabeth — The American Red Cross holds an Introduction to Disaster Course at 1:00 p.m. at the Elizabeth Chapter office, 203 West Jersey St. For info call Victor Webb Jr. at 908-756-6414.

ARTZ

Ongoing

Newark — African Globe presents Music Lab every Friday through Dec. 20th at 7:00 p.m. For info call 973-624-1584.

Newark — NJPAC & WBGO presents Jazz for Teens classes on Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. — 4:00

p.m. at the Lucent Technologies Center for Arts Education, 24 Rector St.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19

Newark — Mayor Sharpe James, Neighborhood and Recreational Services, and Dr. Albert J. Lewis, Jr. host Christmas Jazz Concerts for Seniors, 11:30 a.m. at the Senior Day Care Center, 43 Hill St., and 2:30 p.m. at Casa Mia Senior Homes, 502 Summer Ave., For info call 973-733-6454.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

Newark — The NJPAC hosts Three Mo' Tenors — gospel, jazz, soul and blues performances by three renowned African American tenors, at 8:00 p.m. in Prudential Hall. Call 1-888-466-5722.

Newark — Mayor Sharpe James, Neighborhood and Recreational Services, and Dr. Albert J. Lewis, Jr. host Christmas Jazz Concerts for Seniors, 11:30 a.m. at New Community, 1 South 8th St., and 2:30 p.m. at New Community, 140 South Orange St. For info call 973-733-6454.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 23

Newark — Mayor Sharpe James, Neighborhood and Recreational Services, and Dr. Albert J. Lewis, Jr. host Christmas Jazz Concerts for Seniors, 11:30 a.m. at Beth Israel Adult Day Center, 120 Lyons Ave., and 2:30 p.m. at the Janes White Manor, 516 Bergen St. For info call 973-733-6454.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24

Newark — Mayor Sharpe James, Neighborhood and Recreational Services, and Dr. Albert J. Lewis, Jr. host Christmas Jazz Concerts for Seniors, 11:30 a.m. at New Community, 266 South Orange Ave. and 2:30 p.m. at St. Villa Senior Homes, 425 Sanford Ave. For info call 973-733-6454.

RELIGION

Ongoing

Newark — The Network of Christian Men, Inc., in cooperation with the Newark Literacy Campaign, Inc., seeks male and

female volunteers to tutor adults, on Thursdays from 6:30 p.m. — 8:00 p.m. To become a tutor or to enroll for instruction contact Stanley Crawford at 973-623-4001, or Isaac Thomas, Jr., at 973-371-9741.

Newark — The St. James Intergenerational After School Program is accepting registrations for the 2003 school year. Call Ruby Hush at 973-824-5664.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

Newark — The Men's Ministry celebrates the Reason for the Season at 6:30 p.m., St. James A.M.E. Church, 588 MLK Blvd. For info call 973-622-1344.

Newark — Y.E.S. Mentoring and Fellowship Night for Teens will be held in the St. James A.M.E. Church, Blake House, 604 MLK Blvd., from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. For info call 973-622-1344.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20 — SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29

Newark — The African Globe Theatre presents Langston's Hughes' creation Black Nativity, The Christmas Story at Newark Symphony Hall, 1028 Broad St., For info call 973-624-1584.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

Newark — Mayor Sharpe James, the Department of Neighborhood and Recreational Services, and Dr. Albert J. Lewis, Jr. host Christmas Gospel Concerts for Seniors at 7:00 p.m., One Branch Brook Plaza, One Branch Brook Park. For info call 973-733-6454.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28

Newark — Mayor Sharpe James, the Department of Neighborhood and Recreational Services, and Dr. Albert J. Lewis, Jr. host Christmas Gospel Concerts for Seniors at 7:00 p.m. at James C. White Manor, 516 Bergen St. For info call 973-733-6454.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 30

Newark — There will be a HOPE TOUR featuring Yolanda Adams, Kirk Franklin and Donnie McClurkin at Symphony Hall. For info call Rev. Natasha Johnson at 973-622-1344.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31 THRU WED., JANUARY 1

Newark — For Singles Only hosts a New Year's Eve Afterset for adults over age 21 after service at St. James A.M.E. Church, 588 Dr. MLK Blvd. The will be food, fellowship, games and a Karaoke contest. There is a \$15.00 charge. For more info contact Rev. Raquel St. Clair, at 973-622-1344, ext. 19.

Mail your calendar events and photographs at least two weeks in advance to:

**City News Publishing
111 Mulberry St., TH-C
Newark, NJ 07102 or
Fax to: 973-642-5444**

Grandma

nglow will find it hard to
sleep tonight they know t
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One size fits all.

